

Necton Little Oaks

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY360445
Inspection date	07 May 2008
Inspector	Georgina Emily Hobson Matthews
Setting Address	Grounds of Necton Primary School, School Road, Necton, Swaffham, PE37 8HT
Telephone number	01760 722252
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Registered person	The Trustees of Necton Little Oaks
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Necton Little Oaks is an established pre-school that opened in its current premises in 2007. It is situated in the grounds of Necton Primary School and operates from a purpose built mobile unit. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor area. The pre-school serves a wide catchment area. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The pre-school is registered to care for 26 children from two years to under five years. There are currently 42 children on roll and this includes 35 children who receive funding for nursery education. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are held each morning from 08:50 until 11:50 and on Fridays this is extended until 12:50. Afternoon sessions are held on Mondays and Wednesdays for the youngest children from 12:30 until 15:00.

The pre-school is managed by a board of trustees and employs four staff members to work with the children. Two staff members have early years qualifications to Level 3 and two have

Level 2 qualifications. The board also employs an administrator and a cleaner. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean environment and their health is promoted well. They are protected from becoming ill as staff members display good hygiene practice. Generally effective systems are in place to prevent the spread of infection. Children learn the importance of personal hygiene and to take responsibility for their own personal needs as staff members talk to them about the importance of washing their hands. They are able to attend to their own needs as they access the toilets independently. Children are encouraged to wash their hands after toileting and before eating and paper towels are provided for this purpose. However, cross-contamination is not prevented outdoors after water play as a cotton towel is shared by the children. Procedures are in place in order to take appropriate measures if children are ill as information is obtained from parents prior to the commencement of care. Children's welfare is promoted as staff members can respond to accidents appropriately. Each staff member holds current first aid training and a first aid box is well stocked and easily accessible.

Children benefit from a healthy diet and develop a valuable awareness of healthy eating at the pre-school. They access a snack bar each day in their own time. Children choose from a selection of fresh fruit and vegetables and drinks of milk or water. Special dietary requirements are identified prior to the commencement of care to ensure that parents' wishes and any religious needs are met and that no child is at risk from a reaction to food. Children learn about healthy eating. Staff members talk to them about nutritious foods; display a healthy living poster within the play area and involve the children in activities such as 'Pack a healthy lunch box'. Children are able to help themselves to water throughout each session.

Children develop a positive attitude to exercise. They show an awareness of space as they move with confidence in and outside the setting. Children have opportunities to explore a variety of physical movements each day. They move with control and co-ordination on a climbing frame, a slide and balancing beams. Children are able to travel around, over and through as they balance and climb. They manoeuvre themselves around outdoors on tricycles. Children have great fun in a game where they imitate animal steps. They show delight as they make the 'slow heavy steps of an elephant', 'fast cheetah steps', 'tiny giraffe steps', 'gorilla swaggers' and 'rhino stomps'. Children learn to swim at Necton Primary School with a specialist teacher on Tuesday mornings and have physical education sessions on a Monday in the school hall. They develop manipulative skills and handle tools with competence as they make items such as binoculars and during sand and water play. Children rest according to their individual needs in a quiet book corner where they make themselves comfortable on large cushions.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure and safe, indoor and outdoor environment. They have sufficient space for free movement and to spread out activities. There is adequate storage space for resources and equipment. Children use a wide range of developmentally appropriate, safe and suitable equipment. Additional choices are easily accessed from clearly labelled, low-level storage units. Children's safety is fostered as the pre-school has carried out a risk

assessment of the setting to reduce hazards and to minimise the risk of accidental injury to children. Staff members risk assess the premises on a daily basis before the children arrive. In addition, a procedure is in place to identify, record and set up action plans to address any new risks. However, on the day of inspection hazardous items such as sharp scissors were accessible to children in the office and the quiet room. As a result, children's safety is not assured.

Children learn to keep themselves safe. They are provided with clear explanations about safety issues within the setting, for example not to run in the main play area. Children learn about road and fire safety and of how to stay safe in the sun.

Children are safeguarded as staff members are aware of their responsibilities in the area of child protection. They have a secure understanding of the procedures to follow if they have child protection concerns. Each staff member has attended child protection training and updates this on a regular basis. Sound systems are in place to release children into the care of other adults in the event of an emergency.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The pre-school improves outcomes for children under three years. Staff members have a good understanding of the needs of younger children and provide appropriate activities and resources to support their physical and emotional development. Young children are happy on arrival at the pre-school. Staff members welcome the children and invite them to sit on the carpet. A calm learning environment is created and a staff member explains what activities are available to the children for the session. Children are able to make choices and to play at their own pace. Additional resources are easily accessible. Children play independently or alongside each other, indoors and outdoors.

Children are beginning to share news and feelings as part of a group. They use their senses to explore paint, sand, water and dough and enjoy the feeling of the cool water trickling through their fingers and the 'squashy' texture of wet sand. Children have fun peeping through the climbing frame and join in familiar songs with enthusiasm. Lots of concentration is shown as children arrange animals in the sand trays and fit building blocks into a wooden truck.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Each staff member has a secure understanding of the Foundation Stage and is able to explain the planning and delivery of the curriculum. They encourage the children to become involved and provide them with thoughtful support and encouragement. Children are interested and keen to join in. They remain focussed and gentle open questioning from staff members helps them to persevere and complete activities with success. The assessment of children's learning is effective. Staff members know the children well and key workers record observations to provide a picture of children's progress. Time is allocated each week to discuss the next steps required in each child's development.

Children's language skills are developing well. They use language to recreate roles during their imaginary play in the 'café' and enjoy exploring the sounds of words such as 'wiggly and wiggly'. Children link sounds to letters for example 'S' for a slippery snake. They know that print carries meaning and recognise their own names as they self-register. Children practise their emergent writing as they take orders in the café. There are lots of opportunities within the pre-school for children to recognise numbers. Children are very keen to do so at circle time and proud when they do so correctly. They say and use numbers in their play and one child listens carefully as another counts the number of DVDs he has at home using his fingers to aid

this calculation. Children sort animals into different criteria and recognise when there are more or less of one sort. They explore shape, space and measurement. For example, children think about the concept of 'how tall'. They take photographs of groups of children and discuss their different sizes. This discussion is extended as they look at photographs of animals.

Children investigate by using all of their senses as they explore different materials. They find out about living things as they grow cress and sunflowers. A visit from a snake and its owner has been postponed until after the snake has shed its skin. Children learn to build and construct and think about which tools to select. They consider how to make a set of binoculars for the animal safari and each child completes a set with care. Children have opportunities to operate a remote controlled car and simple computer programmes, although the pre-school's computer is not operable at this time due to a recent leak in the roof.

Children have lots of opportunities to develop their creativity. They enjoy free painting; recreate the patterns of the skins of different animals and make three-dimensional snakes, flying pterodactyls and clay dinosaurs. Children immerse themselves in imaginary play in a 'café' or as they 'fly off' in an aeroplane to see animals in the jungle. They join in simple songs with enthusiasm. Children learn to recognise rhythms and to make sounds with instruments during music sessions each week with a visiting musician.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children feel a sense of belonging at the pre-school as staff members offer them a warm welcome when they arrive. Children select their name cards and join a staff member on the carpet to look at a selection of books. Activities are set up prior to the opening of each session and children settle quickly to activities of their choice.

Children's individual needs are identified prior to the commencement of care. They are valued and treated with equal concern and activities are adapted to accommodate their needs. Children develop positive attitudes to diversity as the pre-school includes images of the different people that make up our society within its resources. They celebrate a variety of festivals such as Easter, Christmas, Chinese New Year and Diwali. Children become aware of the local community. The pre-school has close links with Necton Primary school. Children visit the school for swimming lessons, to exercise in the school hall and to watch the reception class' school assembly on Chinese New Year. Children enjoy nature walks within local fields. The pre-school has experience of caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Children behave very well. They require little instruction as they clearly know what is expected of them. Children understand responsible behaviour and can distinguish between right and wrong. Staff members offer the children lots of praise and encouragement and use positive behaviour management strategies that are appropriate to each child's level of understanding and maturity. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They separate easily from their parents and are interested in activities. Children are confident to try new activities such as making binoculars. They maintain attention, concentrate and sit quietly as they listen to others during circle time. Children speak with confidence to the group as they show things from home and talk about what the pre-school's 'Benjamin Bear' did at their homes. They are able to share, to take turns and to negotiate with others during their play.

Children are supported in the transition between home and the pre-school in order that they are secure and make good progress. Parents are able to assess that children's well-being is

being promoted as they are provided with written information about the pre-school's policies and procedures. They receive regular newsletters to update them of future activities and events. Children's ongoing progress is promoted as the staff members work closely with parents and provide opportunities at the beginning and end of each day to share information regarding the children. Parents are able to be involved in their child's time at pre-school by acting as a parent helper or as a member of the board of trustees. Their satisfaction in the pre-school is reflected in their positive feedback

The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of funding for early education is good. Parents are provided with written information about the pre-school's nursery education provision. They are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning as they are provided with information about the activities in which the children will be involved each term. Parents are invited to access their child's 'Learning Story' and to share what they know about their children within these records of development, once they have been set up. At this point, however, there is no system for parents to provide information about children's starting points in order to fully challenge children at the outset of their nursery education. Parents are invited to discuss their child's ongoing progress with their child's key worker on an informal basis.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The pre-school's team of staff has a clear vision of how they want the setting to run and has worked with the board of trustees to develop a comprehensive operational plan. The board of trustees has robust recruitment, induction, appraisal and professional development systems in place. As a result, children benefit from the care of an appropriately vetted, qualified and experienced team of staff. They are never left alone with anyone who is not vetted. Children's progress is enhanced as staff members access ongoing training to improve their practice.

Staff members organise the setting effectively to accommodate children's play. They are able to move around easily and safely and to access equipment in a well-prepared environment. The foyer houses an office, toilets and space where children may place their outdoor clothing. A quiet room adjoins the main play room. The latter is set up with an imaginary play area, a book corner, areas for the exploration of water, sand, paint, dough and clay, a carpet area for circle time and a table for mark-making activities. This room provides access to a pleasant outdoor play area. Overall children's needs are met.

Documentation to promote the welfare and care of the children is extremely well-organised and stored securely in the office to ensure confidentiality. Generally, an accurate record of children's attendance is maintained. However, on the day of inspection, the children's departure times were not recorded as they left in order to ensure each child's well-being in an emergency.

Leadership and management of early education is good. Children receive a broad and balanced curriculum that covers the six areas of learning. Staff members work with their link teacher to assess the strengths and weaknesses within the curriculum and liaise with the reception teacher from Necton Primary School to develop their planning. The staff team display a commitment to children's achievement and development and are enthusiastic in their approach. As a result, children make good progress.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, in their former premises, the pre-school was asked to ensure that an accurate record of accidents is maintained at all times; to review and amend policies and procedures and to promote children's independence throughout the session. All policies have been reviewed since moving to the new site; a system is in place to maintain an accurate record of any accidents and the setting is organised effectively to promote children's independence. In addition, the pre-school was asked to enable all staff to make the best use of activities to promote children's learning and to provide further opportunities for children to practise mark making and to listen to stories. Each member of staff is involved in the planning and delivery of nursery education and a mark making table and a comfortable book corner are set up within the setting at each session.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- develop systems to prevent the spread of infection when children dry their hands during outdoor play
- assess the risks to children in relation to the office and the quiet room and take action to minimise these
- maintain an accurate record of children's attendance at all times.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- develop systems to obtain information from parents about children's starting points within the different areas of learning.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk